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EXAMINER

WHIPPLE, BRIAN P

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-20 are pending in this application and presented for examination.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments filed on 2/13/08 have been fully considered and are partially persuasive.
3. As to claim 1, Applicant has amended to clarify the dynamic generation of the device identifier as opposed to the previous language related to a "pre-existing pool" (see previous Office Action mailed 11/13/07). Examiner agrees this language satisfies the written description requirement of 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph.
4. As to claim 1, Applicant's previously mentioned amendment (see the preceding paragraph) also overcomes the 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph rejection of claim 1.
5. Applicant's remaining arguments filed 2/13/08 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

6. As to claim 1, Applicant argues the claim satisfies the written description requirement of 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph because Fig. 7 of the instant drawings shows that none of the entries are a telephone number. Examiner reminds Applicant that the MPEP states “Any negative limitation... must have basis in the original disclosure... The mere absence of a positive recitation is not basis for an exclusion. Any claim containing a negative limitation which does not have basis in the original disclosure should be rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement” [see 2173.05(i), Negative Limitations].

The same reasoning applies to the negative limitations of claims 4 and 13.

7. As to claim 1, Applicant argues Okano fails to disclose a device that is a wireless device for which a network address cannot be used as the device identifier. In response to applicant's arguments against the references individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Aoyama is relied upon to disclose a device that is a wireless device for which a network address cannot be used as the device identifier, not Okano.

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8. Applicant argues the cited references fail to disclose the newly amended language of claim 1. The amended language is properly addressed under the prior art rejections below.

9. As to claims 4 and 13, Applicant argues the cited references fails to disclose correlation data that is a device type that is not the manufacturer. Examiner continues to maintain his rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, written description. Therefore, the claims continue to be rejected according to the previous language absent the negative limitation.

10. Applicant argues the dependent claims are allowable due to the argued allowability of the independent claims, but the examiner maintains his rejections of the independent claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

11. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

12. Claims 1-9 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter

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which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

13. As to claim 1, excluding the mobile phone number as a device identifier is a negative limitation that appears to have no support in the specification [see MPEP 2173.05(i), Negative Limitations].

14. As to claims 4 and 13, the device type not indicating the manufacturer is a negative limitation that appears to have no support in the specification [see MPEP 2173.05(i), Negative Limitations].

15. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

16. Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

17. As to claim 1, the meaning of “a pre-existing pool” is unclear. If the device identifier is a set number of decimal or hexadecimal numbers, or even a set number of characters and/or numbers, the device identifier would appear to come from a pre-existing pool. A pre-existing pool could even be defined as hexadecimal or decimal numbers and not necessarily confined by the number of the digits used.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

18. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

19. Claims 1-2, 9-11, 14-16, and 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okano et al. (Okano), U.S. Publication No. 2002/0062485 A1, in view of Aoyama et al. (Aoyama), U.S. Publication No. 2003/0199265 A1.

20. As to claim 1, Okano discloses a method for assigning a device identifier to a device (Abstract), the method comprising:

receiving a request for the device identifier at a server ([0084], ln. 1-5; [0088], ln. 1-4);

obtaining the device identifier ([0092]; temporarily allocated IP addresses are set), the device identifier being unique from device identifiers of other devices of the server ([0170]; duplicate IP addresses are prevented) that is dynamically generated by the server in response to a request ([0002], DHCP is short for Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol, "dynamically allocate an IP address"; [0092]; [0170]; DHCP dynamically generates one of any number of IP addresses from a pool and prevents duplicate addresses; the mere existence of a pool does not mean the generation of the device identifier is not dynamic, static simply means a set device identifier is assigned to one device; rather, the generation is dynamic, in that any of the identifiers from the pool may be assigned, may be revoked if found to be a duplicate or rejected by the client, and assignment is based on a lease time as opposed to statically set permanently; clearly the fact that DHCP is called **Dynamic** Host Configuration Protocol, DHCP being an extremely well known protocol, makes it clear that the definition of dynamic as interpreted by the examiner is in line with the interpretations of those of ordinary skill in the art);

marking a status of the device identifier as pending ([0092]; the IP addresses are set as temporarily allocated, which is marking the device identifiers as pending);

sending the device identifier to the device ([0098]);

marking the status of the device identifier as in use after receiving an acknowledgment from the device ([0099]; [0102]); and

sending a confirmation to the device after the acknowledgment is received ([0102]; [0110]).

Okano is silent on the device is a wireless device that does not have a readily accessible device identifier or other communications related information and for which a network address or host name cannot be used as the device identifier.

However, Aoyama discloses the device is a wireless device that does not have a readily accessible device identifier or other communications related information and for which a network address or host name cannot be used as the device identifier ([0094]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Okano by obtaining a device identifier other than a network address or host name for a wireless device as taught by Aoyama in order to obtain a device identifier, such as a mobile phone number, to enable communications (Aoyama: [0094]).

21. As to claim 2, Okano and Aoyama disclose the invention substantially as in parent claim 1, including receiving a second acknowledgment from the device (Okano: [0110]-[0111]; [0149]-[0151]; it is inherent in and a standard feature of DHCP, which is taught by Okano, that a second acknowledgement is sent from a device to renew its lease); and

sending a second confirmation to the device (Okano: [0102]; [0110]-[0111]; [0147]-[0151]; it is inherent in and a standard feature of DHCP, which is taught by Okano, that a server sends a confirmation to renewal requests in the form of a DHCPACK message to extend a device's lease).

22. As to claim 9, Okano and Aoyama disclose the invention substantially as in parent claim 1, including reusing the device identifier for another request received from another device after a time out period has elapsed (Okano: [0200]); and

sending a rejection to the device if the acknowledgment is received after the time out period has elapsed (Okano: [0200]; the timed out subscriber terminal is disabled to use the IP address, which is a rejection).

23. As to claim 10, Okano discloses a method of obtaining a device identifier for a device (Abstract), the method comprising:

sending a request for the device identifier to a server ([0084], ln. 1-5; [0088], ln. 1-4), the device identifier being unique from device identifiers of other devices of the server ([0170]);

sending an acknowledgment to the server after receiving the device identifier from the server ([0092]; [0098]-[0099]; [0102]; an acknowledgement is sent to the server in the form of a DHCP request packet); and

using the device identifier after receiving a confirmation from the server ([0102]; [0110]-[0111]).

Okano is silent on the device is a wireless device that does not have a readily accessible device identifier or other communications related information and for which a network address or host name cannot be used as the device identifier.

However, Aoyama discloses the device is a wireless device that does not have a readily accessible device identifier or other communications related information and for which a network address or host name cannot be used as the device identifier ([0094]).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Okano by obtaining a device identifier other than a network address or host name for a wireless device as taught by Aoyama in order to obtain a device identifier, such as a mobile phone number, to enable communications (Aoyama: [0094]).

24. As to claim 11, Okano and Aoyama disclose the invention substantially as in parent claim 10, including a timestamp is also received from the server, and wherein the

acknowledgment includes the device identifier and the timestamp (Okano: [0092]; [0110]-[0111]; a lease time is set, which is a timestamp).

25. As to claim 14, Okano and Aoyama disclose the invention substantially as in parent claim 10, including sending a second acknowledgment to the server if the confirmation has not been received after a time out period (Okano: Abstract; it is inherent in and a standard feature of DHCP, which is taught by Okano, that a second acknowledgement is sent to the server after a time out period).

26. As to claims 15 and 18, the claims are rejected for the same reasons as claim 1 above.

27. As to claims 16 and 19, the claims are rejected for the same reasons as claim 10 above.

28. As to claim 20, the claim is rejected for the same reasons as claim 9 above.

29. Claims 3-7, 12-13, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okano and Aoyama as applied to claims 1, 10, and 15 above, in view of Matsuda et al. (Matsuda), U.S. Publication No. 2002/0133573 A1, and with Poger et al. (Poger), U.S. Patent No. 6,772,420 B1, providing intrinsic evidence for claims 4 and 13.

30. As to claim 3, Okano and Aoyama disclose the invention substantially as in parent claim 1, but are silent on managing a set of device entries at the server, wherein each of the set of device entries includes a device identifier, a status, and correlation data, and wherein the request includes correlation data for the device.

However, Matsuda does disclose managing a set of device entries at the server ([0064], ln. 1-4),

wherein each of the set of device entries includes a device identifier, a status, and correlation data ([0064]; a MAC address and an IP address are device identifiers; a name_in_use code is a status; a host name is correlation data), and

wherein the request includes correlation data for the device ([0065], ln. 1-7; a host name is included in the request for configuration of the device).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Okano and Aoyama by managing a set of device entries at a server, the device entries including a device identifier, a status, and correlation data and by including correlation data for a device in a request as taught by Matsuda in order to provide automatic configuration services for unadministered networks while being automatically adaptable within administered environments (Matsuda, Abstract, ln. 4-7), in order to enable a server to keep track of a device's MAC address and corresponding host

name and IP address (Matsuda, [0064]), and in order to allow a client to suggest desired settings in a request (Matsuda, [0065], ln. 5-7).

31. As to claims 4 and 13, Okano, Aoyama, and Matsuda disclose the invention substantially as in parent claims 3 and 12, including the correlation data includes a device type and user data (Matsuda: [0064]; [0065], ln. 1-7; a host name is user data; a MAC address associated with a DHCP request is correlation data; it is inherent that a device type is included in the correlation data as device type information is embedded in the MAC address, which is in turn embedded in DHCP messages, see Poger, Col. 3, ln. 19-31 and Col. 4, ln. 48-55).

32. As to claim 5, Okano, Aoyama, and Matsuda disclose the invention substantially as in parent claim 3, including each of the set of device entries further includes a timestamp, the method further comprising setting the timestamp when the status is marked as pending (Okano: [0092]; temporarily allocated IP addresses are made and lease times are set, which is setting a timestamp when the status is marked as pending).

33. As to claim 6, Okano and Aoyama disclose the invention substantially as in parent claim 1, but are silent on providing correlation data at the server;

generating at least one device identifier based on the correlation data before the request is received;

marking the status of the generated at least one identifier as unused; and

locating one of the at least one device identifier having a status marked as unused after the request is received using the correlation data for the at least one device identifier and correlation data in the request.

However, Matsuda does disclose providing correlation data at the server ([0077]-[0078]; a preset address range is associated with clients requesting IP addresses from the DHCP server, wherein the preset address range at the DHCP server is correlation data at the server);

generating at least one device identifier based on the correlation data before the request is received ([0077]-[0078]; [0079], ln. 1-3; a maximum of 100 addresses is generated based on the preset address range);

marking the status of the generated at least one identifier as unused (Fig. 7, item 720); and

locating one of the at least one device identifier having a status marked as unused after the request is received using the correlation data for the at least one device identifier and correlation data in the request (Fig. 7, items 704, 706, 708, and 720; [0065]; [0077]-[0078]; an IP address that is not in use is located after the request is received; the preset

address range for the device identifier and the MAC address, desired IP address, and desired host name in the request are used to configure the device, which is correlation data for the device identifier and correlation data in the request).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Okano and Aoyama by providing correlation data at a server, generating device identifiers based on the correlation data before a request is received, marking the device identifiers as unused, and locating an unused device identifier using correlation data for the device identifier and correlation data in the request after the request is received as taught by Matsuda in order to define a range of available client addresses (Matsuda, [0077]), in order to allocate those client addresses (Matsuda, [0077]), in order to define the addresses that the DHCP server can assign (Matsuda, [0079], ln. 1-3), and in order to allow a client to suggest a desired IP address and ascertain if the IP address is suitable (Matsuda, [0065], ln. 5-7 and 36-38).

34. As to claim 7, Okano and Aoyama disclose the invention substantially as in parent claim 1, but are silent on generating a device identifier after receiving the request using correlation data in the request.

However, Matsuda does disclose generating a device identifier after receiving the request using correlation data in the request (Fig. 7, items 704, 706, and 708; [0065]; a device

identifier is generated using the MAC address, desired IP address, and desired host name in the request, which is correlation data in the request).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Okano and Aoyama by generating a device identifier after receiving a request using correlation data in the request as taught by Matsuda in order to allow a client to suggest desired settings in a request (Matsuda, [0065], ln. 5-7).

35. As to claim 12, Okano and Aoyama disclose the invention substantially as in parent claim 10, but are silent on the request includes correlation data.

However, Matsuda does disclose the request includes correlation data ([0065], ln. 1-7; a desired host name is included in the request, which is correlation data in the request).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Okano and Aoyama by including correlation data in a request as taught by Matsuda in order to allow a client to suggest desired settings in a request (Matsuda, [0065], ln. 5-7).

36. As to claim 17, Okano and Aoyama disclose the invention substantially as in parent claim 15, but are silent on a management system for managing a set of device entries,

wherein each of the set of device entries includes a unique device identifier, a status, and correlation data, wherein the request includes correlation data for the device; and
a comparison system for obtaining one of the set of device entries based on correlation data for the device.

However, Matsuda does disclose a management system for managing a set of device entries ([0064], ln. 1-4),

wherein each of the set of device entries includes a unique device identifier, a status, and correlation data ([0064]; a MAC address and IP address are unique device identifiers; a name_in_use code is a status; a host name is correlation data),

wherein the request includes correlation data for the device ([0065], ln. 1-7; a host name is included in the request for configuration of the device); and

a comparison system for obtaining one of the set of device entries based on correlation data for the device (Fig. 7, items 704, 706, and 708; [0065]; the desired IP address in the request is used to obtain an IP address, which is correlation data for the device).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Okano and Aoyama by managing a set of device entries at a management system, the device entries including a unique device identifier, a status, and correlation data and by including correlation data for a device in a request as taught by Matsuda in order to provide automatic configuration services for unadministered networks

while being automatically adaptable within administered environments (Matsuda, Abstract, ln. 4-7), in order to enable a management system to keep track of a device's MAC address and corresponding host name and IP address (Matsuda, [0064]), in order to allow a client to suggest desired settings in a request to obtain an IP address (Matsuda, [0065], ln. 5-7), and in order to obtain an IP address so that a device may communicate across an IP network or networks.

37. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okano and Aoyama as applied to claim 1 above, in view of Meier, U.S. Patent No. 7,096,273 B1.

38. As to claim 8, Okano and Aoyama disclose the invention substantially as in parent claim 1, but are silent on marking the status of the device identifier as unused if the acknowledgment is not received after a time out period.

However, Meier does disclose marking the status of the device identifier as unused if the acknowledgment is not received after a time out period (Col. 2, ln. 8-15).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the teachings of Okano and Aoyama by marking a device identifier as unused if an acknowledgement is not received after a time out period as taught by Meier in

order to put the device identifier back into a pool ready to be re-used (Meier, Col. 2, ln. 13-15).

Conclusion

39. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

40. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian P. Whipple whose telephone number is (571)270-1244. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri (8:30 AM to 5:00 PM EST).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Bunjob Jaroenchonwanit can be reached on (571) 272-3913. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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